



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACCESS TO LAB TESTING WOULD EXPAND UNDER NEW LAW

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX (March 2, 2015) –A bill moving through the Arizona Legislature would give Arizonans more control over their healthcare and allow them to order any laboratory test they want without requiring a doctor's order.

Its sponsor, Rep. Heather Carter (R-Phoenix), wants to change state law to give people more access to information about their health and build on the state's reputation as a leader in health care innovation. "I truly believe that this will position Arizona to be a leader in healthcare reform." Rep. Carter said.

Today, Arizonans can get about fifty different tests without seeing a physician. But HB2645 would expand the law to make all tests directly available to people who want to pay for tests that could help them take ownership of their health, and get the knowledge they and their physicians need to better their health. The majority of states allow this direct testing, but this bill would make Arizona the first state in the nation to most explicitly deregulate it.

Here in Arizona, Theranos, a company that provides low-cost lab testing and can use only a few drops of blood from a pinprick instead of a painful needle, is already providing individuals better access to the health information they need. Arizonans from all across the state travel to their labs inside 40 Walgreens stores in the Phoenix area. It is the first market in what the two companies say will be a partnership throughout greater Arizona and the nation.

Theranos lists its prices on its website which are substantially lower than Medicare reimbursement rates in Arizona, with the potential to save Medicare hundreds of millions of dollars/year in Arizona. These lower costs help Arizonans fulfill their doctors' requests for tests that aren't covered by insurance or if an individual has a high deductible. Supporters of the bill said that the competition and transparency associated with individuals having access to tests and their associated prices would further save money for the state's publicly funded programs.

Elizabeth Holmes, the founder and CEO of Theranos, spoke in support of the bill. "Giving people the right to obtain a laboratory test will, by definition, begin the process of enabling them to engage in their health," Holmes said.

The bill acknowledges that not everyone who has a test done will seek clinical advice from a physician. Supporters worked with other stakeholders to reassure healthcare providers that expanding individual access to lab tests would not create potential legal liability for healthcare providers.

The House voted 57 to 0 to pass the bill on February 19, sending it on to consideration in the Arizona Senate.

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